Fordham, near New-York,

Feb. 14 — 49.

GRISWOLD MSS.

My dear friend Thomas,

Your letter, dated Nov. 27, has reached me at a little village of the Empire State, after having taken, at its leisure, a very considerable tour among the P. Offices — occasioned, I presume, by your endorsement "to forward" wherever I might be — and the fact is, where I might not have been, for the last three months, is the legitimate question. At all events, now that I have your well-known M.S. before me, it is most cordially welcome. Indeed, it seems an age since I heard from you and a decade of ages since I shook you by the hand — although I hear of you now and then. Right glad am I to find you once more in a true position — in the field of Letters". Depend upon it, after all, Thomas, Literature is the most noble of professions. In fact, it is about the only one fit for a man. For my own part, there is no reducing me from the path. I shall be a littérateur, at least, all my life; nor would I abandon the hopes which still lead me on for all the gold in California. Talking of gold, and of the temptations at present held out to "poor-devil authors", did it ever strike you that all which is really valuable to a man of letters — to a poet in especial — is absolutely unpurchaseable? Love, fame, the dominion of intellect, the consciousness of power, the thrilling sense of beauty, the free air of Heaven, exercise of body & mind, with the physical and moral health which result — these and such as these are really all that a poet cares for: — then answer me this — why should he go to California? Like Brutus, "I pause for a reply" — which, like F.W. Thomas, I take it for granted you have no intention of giving me. —

[illegible] I wish you would come down on the Frogpondians. They are getting worse and worse, and pretend not to be aware that there are any literary people out of Boston. The worst and most disgusting part of the matter is, that the Bostonians are really, as a race, far inferior in point of anything beyond mere talent, to any other set upon the continent of N. A. They are decidedly the most servile imitators of the English it is possible to conceive. I always get into a passion when I think about. It would be the easiest thing in the world to use them up en masse. One really well-written satire would accomplish the business: — but it must not be such a dish of skimmed milk-and-water as Lowell's.

I suppose you have seen that affair – the "Fable for Critics" I mean. Miss Fuller, that detestable old maid – told him, once, that he was "so wretched a poet as to be disgusting even to his best friends". This set him off at a tangent and he has never been quite right since: – so he took to writing Satire against mankind in general, with Margaret Fuller and her protégé, Cornelius Matthews, in particular. It is miserably weak upon the whole, but has one or two good, but by no means original, things – Oh, there is "nothing new under the sun" & Solomon is right – for once. I sent a review of the "Fable" to the "S. L. Messenger" a day or two ago, and I only hope Thompson will print it. Lowell is a ranting abolitionist and deserves a good using up. It is a pity that he is a poet. — I have not seen your paper yet, and hope you will mail me one – regularly if you can spare it. I will send you something whenever I get a chance. — [illegible] – The rock on which most new enterprizes, in the paper way, split, is namby-pamby-ism. It never did do & never will. No yea-nay journal ever succeeded. – but I know there is little danger of your making the Chronicle a yea-nay one. I have been quite out of the literary world for the last three years, and have said little or nothing, but –, like the owl, I have "taken it out in thinking". By and bye I mean to come out of the bush, and then I have some old scores to settle. I fancy I see some of my friends already stepping up to the Captain's office. The fact is, Thomas, living buried in the country makes a man savage – wolfish. I am just in the humor for a fight. You will be pleased to hear that I am in better health than I ever knew myself to be – full of energy and bent upon success. You shall hear of me again shortly – and it is not improbable that I may soon pay you a visit in Louisville. — If I can do anything for you in New-York, let me know. — Mrs Clemm sends her best respects & begs to be remembered to your mother's family, if they are with you. — You would oblige me very especially if you could squeeze in what follows, editorially. The lady spoken of is a most particular friend of mine, and deserves all I have said of her. I will reciprocate the favor I ask, whenever you say the word and show me how. Address me at N. York City, as usual and if you insert the following, please cut it out & enclose it in your letter.

Truly your friend, Edgar A. Poe.

Mrs S. Anna Lewis. This lady, although for several years past holding high rank among American poets, has lately achieved new bays by her "Child of the Sea and Other Poems", published by George P. Putnam, of N. York. The literary journals are full of her praises. Bryant and Willis have spoken of her in terms of warm respect; and, in a late "Southern Messenger", Mr Poe had quite an elaborate review of her poems generally, and commended them as richly imaginative and passionate. He quoted, among other minor pieces, one entitled "The Forsaken". It has since gone the rounds of the press, and Mr Griswold has introduced it into his "Female Poets of America" — It is, indeed, one of the most thrillingly pathetic poems in the English language. "The Child of the Sea" is a long romance, of the Corsair stamp, full of passion, adventure, and brilliant description — much such a poem as Mrs Maria Brooks (Maria del Occidente) might have written on a similar theme. The poem next in length is entitled "The Broken Heart", and, as the title indicates, is a tale of that "true love" which "did never run smooth". The story is full of fire and nerve. Among the shorter compositions we most particularly admire the "Lament of La Vega", "My Study" (a perfect sonnet), "Una" and "The Bard". The poems of Mrs Lewis, generally, are distinguished by a fluent abandon of style and thought, throughout all which the strictest precision of language is preserved. She is quite accomplished, a good classical scholar, young, and beautiful in face and form.

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